

# The Book Club of California *Quarterly* *News-Letter*

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by The Book Club of California*

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# The Book Club of California

FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to 875 members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues. Dues date from the month of the member's election. Regular membership is \$18.00; Sustaining, \$30.00; Patron, \$100.00.

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### *Quarterly News-Letter*

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# *Quarterly NEWS-LETTER*

VOLUME XXXIV

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## *The Pleasures of Packing A Library*

[Concluded]

By NORMAN H. STROUSE

The affluent collectors have long followed the tradition of maintaining at least a librarian, perhaps even a library staff. That has neither been my option nor my wish. I have been my own accessions clerk, bibliographer, and librarian. In recent years this has become an increasing burden, but it has nevertheless permitted me to continue to savor each item in the process of acquisition—through catalogue, private treaty, or that constantly rewarding personal relationship with dealers.

I do poach a bit on the convenience of a secretarial staff at the office, both for correspondence and the periodic updating of my mimeographed catalogue, but each catalogue card is typed by my own hand with the bare essentials of author, title, summary bibliographical data, source of purchase, date of purchase and price. All this serves its purpose for insurance, tax information for gifts, and general reference. It is the space control center for explorations into the small galaxy of my collection, and the source of enormous pleasure.

One of the pleasures of packing is the opportunity to refer back to catalogue cards and recall what was paid for many of the items in the heart of one's collection. Of particular interest to me is what has happened in recent years to the prices of fine press books, long the Cinderellas of the antiquarian book trade.

In the Duschnes catalogue No. 184, just out, is listed a number of Kelmscott Press books which are in my collection. The nine Kelmscott items offered total \$1600 in price. My cards show that I purchased these same items for \$310.00. This is an increase of 416%.

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At the Major Abbey sale last year, 26 Ashendene Press books were sold for a total of \$6985.00. My records show that I purchased these same items for \$3115.00. This is an increase of 124%.

All the famous English presses have enjoyed increased recognition and substantially higher prices during the past five years particularly. This is a dramatic reversal of form. This field was in its doldrums all during the depression, and even into the 60's one could still buy these English press items at what one might today consider bargain prices.

The American presses have not responded to this escalation in the rare book market to the same degree, although there are some exceptions such as the Grabhorn *Leaves of Grass*, Magee bibliographies, and the Japanese print books; some of the best of Bruce Rogers' work such as the *Oxford Lectern Bible*, *The Odyssey Of Homer*, and *The Song Of Roland*; and two of Henry Morris' Bird & Bull Press productions, *Five On Paper* (now offered at \$125.00) and *The Passionate Pirate* (now at \$65.00). Nash Press is still in a somnolent state on the market, and it is puzzling why his *magnum opus*, the four-volume Dante, can still be had for only \$250.00.

Mosher Press has been taking off rapidly since the publication of *The Passionate Pirate* and the beautiful and scholarly *Check List* done for Benton L. Hatch and Ray Nash at Leonard Baskin's The Gehenna Press. "Taking off", incidentally, means an increase in price from \$2.00 to \$5.00 for the Old World Series, for example—still a bargain. Phil Duschnes has one of this series on pure vellum at \$125.00, which two or three years ago could undoubtedly have been had for \$40.00 at best. Which reminds me that I purchased the great Mosher quarto series on pure vellum at the Mosher auction in 1948, referred to earlier, for prices ranging from \$25.00 to \$50.00. Two Mosher Quarto Series on pure vellum, bound magnificently by the Grolier Club Bindery for Henry Poor at the turn of the century, were acquired for far less than the cost of such bindings alone today, if bindings of such quality could be had—which they can't.

By now I was into my ephemera, and prowling through these Mayflies of printing has brought to memory many things which have long disappeared across the horizon of the past. A stray Archetype Press, *Chapbook Number One*, for example, *The Mending Of a Continent* by Robin Lampson, printed in 1937, excites one's curiosity about what happened to this promising poet. He rates a brief mention in the

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1948 edition of "The Reader's Encyclopedia" for two imaginative titles, *Laughter Out of the Ground* and *Death Loses a Pair of Wings*, titles which would have been exciting on a Broadway marquee. But in the 1959 edition his name has been dropped, and all is silence. I understand from David Magee that there recently appeared two feature articles in the *Berkeley Gazette* written by him; and that Wilder Bentley is teaching at San Francisco State.

My next sweep will be through the modern press books, including 533 of Mosher Press, 131 of Grabhorn, 71 of Nash, 52 of Peregrine, 120 of Bruce Rogers, and 320 categorized as "Miscellaneous" because of limited numbers of titles per press. The Ashendene, Doves, Kelmscott and Gregynog collections, totalling almost five hundred items, include books, manuscript material, ephemera and memorabilia and will be among the last hold-outs of packing. So will Victor Hammer, and Strawberry Hill, with 72 and 48 items respectively.

This leaves only the special collections of manuscripts and books about manuscripts, incunabula and books about incunabula, Robert Louis Stevenson, fore-edge paintings, and fine bindings.

I would like to touch briefly on the manuscripts and incunabula, resisting any reference to my Stevenson collection. The orchids of book collecting are undisputedly the manuscript and printed Books of Hours. Sheer beauty is their primary raison d'etre, although they do tell us something of the architecture, secular customs and religious legends of the times. Probably the most beautiful book of Hours I've seen is that of the Duchess of Cleves at the Morgan Library, the facsimile of which was one of the extraordinary publishing values of the past several years.

My first two Horae were the result of my close friendship with Charlie Boesen during my Detroit residence. I had noticed his absence from the shop for several days, and on his return I was naturally curious. He told me he had been in a middle Michigan town to appraise a library at the request of the executors of a recently deceased patent attorney who spent most of his time in Washington. Much to Boesen's surprise the collection, though small, was richly studded with choice selections of incunabula and illuminated manuscripts. He had completed the appraisal and brought back with him a card index of the principal items of value, depressed by the fact that he could have purchased the collection at a very reasonable price, but didn't have the money to do so. He was certain that if he could

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only have it in hand for 90 days he could realize a sufficient sale to his customers to pay for the lot and have the balance of the collection for stock. I suggested a bank loan, but his experience with bankers had not been reassuring. They were not accustomed to making loans on such exotic collateral. I offered to introduce him to the president of a Detroit bank, and assured him that if he would allow me a first selection at reasonable prices I would give him cash for several thousand dollars worth of books.

This was a *quid pro quo* that worked out very well for both parties. He got his loan; I got my choice of books; he sold off what he expected to and had a splendid addition to stock for his pains. Among my spoils of fortune were two illuminated manuscripts and one printed Book of Hours, an incunabulum, some literary manuscripts and other miscellany.

With this start in the "orchid" field of collecting, I began to think in terms of representation again, and ended up with manuscript Horae from England, France, The Netherlands and Italy. Suddenly I realized how beautiful the unpainted printed Books of Hours could be, and began to work that field as well. I acquired the basic books I needed both in manuscript and print while the prices were still low, and flushed out the collection through individual illuminated leaves. Modest though it is, my collection in the field of Books of Hours is one which I could not afford to bring together today. One of the manuscript Horae is from the brief English school of portraiture of around 1420; one is from Boswell's collection at Malahide Castle, with his signature in it. Another is from the Library of Firmin Didot.

I believe my favorite is an Ethiopian illuminated manuscript, a variant of the customary form of Hours, and more properly known as the Legends of the Virgin. In it are 46 full-page and three half-page miniature paintings in bold and vivid coloring, strangely reminiscent of the raw colors and primitive figures of more contemporary Mexican art. The nativity scene is handled in a startlingly uninhibited and realistic fashion, an early precursor of the recent feature in *Life* magazine on the birth of a child.

Among the printed Books of Hours is a magnificent large copy that had passed through the hands of Hoe, Poor and Courtland Bishop. One could not ask for a more resplendent provenance.

Until recent years the cradle books of printing, the incunabula,

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were to be found in only a few of the libraries of private collectors in this country, and those in British and European private collections were in many instances there by the chance of inheritance. Those in institutional collections were more often than not books which had been acquired at a time when these books of early printing were the only ones to be had. Even in the auction records of a hundred years ago, 15th Century books brought prices even in the shillings.

Not so today. Incunabula is no longer an esoteric word, and even a non-collector has been known to inquire about the "in" practice of using the word "incunable" as an alternative for "incunabulum". Few hardy collectors are willing to admit that their shelves fail to sport at least one incunable, at least as a conversation piece.

In resurveying my modest holdings of this genus of the printed book, I recalled my first exposure to incunabula on April 1, 1936, when Dr. Otto H. F. Vollbehr dined with a group of 47 members of the Art, Literature and Music Section of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco and spoke to us briefly on the subject of incunabula. He related the circumstances which led to the acquisition of the 3000-volume Vollbehr collection of incunabula by the Library of Congress, which included what he termed "the finest copy of the Gutenberg Bible extant". This single acquisition for what may now be considered the paltry sum of \$1,500,000 lifted the Library of Congress to a position among the ranking libraries of the world. Dr. Vollbehr displayed 32 incunabula for the enjoyment of the members, and in impromptu fashion donated one of them to the Library of the Commonwealth Club, a Book of Laws printed for Pope Pius V in the year 1476. The Chairman's minutes of the occasion state that there was not another copy of this particular book in America at that time, and that "it should form a nucleus for other donations to the Club's Library, to the end of its possessing a department of rare books." This ambitious plan was never carried out, and this single incunabulum rests safely in their vault.

In an earlier interview with *Touring Topics*, reported in its April 1933 issue, Dr. Vollbehr mentioned two other fine collections of incunabula in California other than that of the Huntington. One was the remains of Adolph Sutro's famed collection of more than 4000 incunabula, substantially reduced in number by the disastrous fire and vandalism of 1906, and now housed in the California State Library. The other collection he referred to as being in the Mudd

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Library of the School of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, second only, he said, to the Huntington Collection.

My own small collection has been brought together simply for the purpose of good representation of the work of these early printers, without preoccupation with rarity. In addition to the two Nuremberg *Chronicles*, however, it does include seven Jensons, headed by a very tall *Plinius*, beautifully illuminated; a Koberger Ninth German *Bible* with accomplished contemporary coloring; a Joh. Otmar *Sermones de Sanctis*, complete with chain; several Aldines including a first edition of Aristophanes from Lord Bexley's Library; a Gunther Zainer from C. H. St. John Hornby's collection; A Chinese block book *Book of Changes* from A. Edward Newton's library; and a Korean book printed with movable types in 1438, a dozen years before Gutenberg got under way. The full five volumes of Haebler, three Caxton leaves, a Gutenberg Bible leaf from the original Houghton copy, plus other miscellaneous incunabula leaves, gives me a wide range of material for study, lecturing and exhibition purposes.

As I have been going through my collection in the process of packing, I have ruminated a bit on the question of why did all these five thousand odd volumes come together. To paraphrase Ecclesiastes, "Of collecting many books there is no end." There is seldom a library, institutional or personal, that does not grow. If there is extra space, it soon fills up. If there is no space left, the shelves overflow and you keep sweeping books into closets, cabinets and into nooks and crannies with the frenzy of the Sorcerer's Apprentice.

What lies at the root of this fateful habit or compulsion to collect books which fastens itself on otherwise sensible individuals?

By observation, as well as experience, it is my educated opinion that there are four different instincts, maybe more, and in varying combinations and degrees of authority.

First, and most obvious, is the *instinct to possess*. Without this you do not have a collector. Instead of being content to borrow books from the library, study art objects in a museum, or see stamps and coins on exhibition, the collector must have these things for himself. However modest the array, he must surround himself with them, with a sense of direct involvement in study, or visual or tactile pleasure; or he may wish to lend a special environmental character to his home. In some less respectable instances he may wish to create a status symbol. The lepers of the collecting community are, of course,

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those who acquire rare materials with the main object of gain through appreciated values. Although the purchase of a rare item solely to deny it to a competitor or enemy has been known to take place among collectors, it is looked upon as a regrettable fall from grace, requiring from the sinner severe penance before reinstatement to normal relationships among his collecting peers.

There is, next, the *instinct for proliferation*. The collector comes on something new he especially treasures, then he finds another related item which may be a bit different, but then a third, and a fourth. Suddenly the desire to proliferate in a particular field takes hold. For example, in an entirely different context, I have in the past purchased an occasional owl figurine, simply because it was an early trade mark for our company, and appeared on our letterhead, corporate seal and stock certificates for many years. Suddenly I find myself with more than 200 owls, in infinite variety and from all over the world. There is no end to this. I see no limit to the number that I might eventually acquire. My wife and I have even considered naming our retirement home "The House of a Thousand Owls", plagiarizing only slightly the name of the beautiful antebellum home in Natchez, Mississippi, called "The House of a Thousand Candles."

Proliferation may even extend to substantial duplication. The most famous collector of duplicates, in fact, was Henry Clay Folger, whose great Folger Library in Washington is a more permanent monument to his talent than the fortune he assembled in the early days of Standard Oil. His fetish for Shakespeare resulted in his acquiring 79 out of the two hundred known copies of the Shakespeare First Folio. Second place goes to the British Museum with but five. The Folger collection also contains 58 copies of the Second Folio, and 36 of the Third.

John Mayfield of Syracuse University collects Swinburne, and has 82 copies of the first edition of *Atalanta in Calydon*. Why so many? Swinburne bibliographers say there are only 110 copies of this first edition. Mr. Mayfield doesn't believe it, so he wants to bring together a collection of 111 copies to prove them wrong.

Mr. Mayfield's collection also illustrates another instinct, the *instinct for completeness*. Anyone who collects stamps knows how demanding are the open spaces of an album, and how compulsive is the desire to fill them. Now the Government has complicated our lives and excited our interest through First Day covers. We all know one

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or more people who are trying to complete collections of pennies, nickels, dimes or quarters to include one of every year minted, largely because albums were created with spaces to contain them.

Book collecting is no exception to this demand for completeness. The Grolier Club published many years ago a compilation of *One Hundred Books Famous in English Literature*. Almost immediately it became the ambition of a number of collectors to have a copy of each of these books in first edition, and they thereby raised the market prices. More recently, Harrison Horblit, a Grolier Club member, compiled a book under the title *One Hundred Books Famous in Medicine and Science*. This has created a new peak for bibliophiles to climb, and the obstacles of price have become more difficult.

There is, fourth, the *instinct for specialization*. Just as a stamp collector might begin by collecting generally, then progressively restrict his collecting to British empire stamps, then to British colonial and finally to the colonial period in Canada (yes, I knew a collector whose collection went through this evolution and he became a world authority in the field), collectors of books and manuscripts tend to become more and more specialized.

Within my own general field of the Art and History of the Book, my collection of the Mosher Press illustrates both the instinct for specialization and completeness. I started collecting Mosher in 1927, and now have 505 items of this important but little known press. I am within 10% of completeness, but along with this I have acquired a great deal of material about Mosher, books from his library, autograph letters, and so on. As a result of this almost forty years of specialization I was able to put together the first published book about Mosher and assemble the most complete check list of Mosher publications under the title of *The Passionate Pirate*. Only 200 copies of the book were printed, and it immediately went out of print. Now it has become a collector's item itself.

There are specialized collections by author (such as Carlyle), by subject (such as the Panama Canal), by field (such as Presidential letters), by kind (such as Books of Hours), and by material (such as the collection of Sir Thomas Phillips, the famous vellomaniac). I've wandered into all these categories and have experienced their insidious charm. There are many pleasures in specialization, and many hazards, not the least of which is basic intolerance of other collector's specialities.

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My own habits of collecting have involved all four of the instincts which I have attempted to describe—possession, proliferation, completeness and specialization.

In none of these is there any true end in sight. Even in completeness one deals with an abstraction. One reaches toward the ideal objective, but never attains it. There is always something missing, some item not recorded but rumored to exist, something unique.

Even the specialist, narrowing down to the most modest span of interest, will still find that there is but one known copy of the first edition of *Love's Labor Lost*, and that is at the Bodleian, never to come on the market.

The lust for possession defeats its own aim. If one has a thousand titles in his field, do there not remain two thousand more somewhere beyond the horizon? The related material automatically spreads far beyond the area of specialization, and infinitely.

As I pack my library, I continue to buy. While my library is in storage I will continue to buy. As I begin to unpack, I will continue to buy. And when one of my book collecting friends of the Jesuit order offers me the last rites as a professional courtesy, I'm sure to ask him if he has a copy of the latest Sotheby Catalogue.

Yes, of collecting books, there is no end!

### Recent Library Acquisitions

By ALBERT SPERISEN

By rare good fortune, the Club again is pleased to announce the acquisition of another lithographic incunable. Through a happy purchase in England, we now own Senefelder's own story of his invention of lithography and of its history. This edition is the first English translation, commissioned by Rudolph Ackermann, who published it in London in 1819. The title is, *A Complete Course in Lithography*, to which has been added a history of that craft. (The original edition of this work was first published in 1818 at Munich).

It may appear to members that your Committee has been giving too much emphasis on lithography in our recent purchases—and the number of important works in this field in the past year may justify the question. But the answer to this is quite simple. For some reason, lithography, and "cradle books" on the subject, are

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not as widely collected as books on the primary medium, letter-press. And when the opportunity arises, we feel we must take advantage of an offer quickly, in this present buyer's market. This quick action accounted for our unique copy of *The Prayer Book of Maximilian*, as reported in the Quarterly, Winter 1967.

Something of the rarity of this *A Complete Course in Lithography* may be mentioned by calling attention to a recent advertisement of that multi-million-dollar organization, the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company's printing division. Illustrating a point of their lithographic products, they reproduced two pages of this book, noting that the volume is from their collection of important works in the field of printing. The copy shown in the advertisement is the second edition, the 1827 copy of this English translation! But more important, our first English edition, while rebound and trimmed (a hurt, but not an important one, since the margins of the original edition must have been excessive) came from the famous library of Paul (Adolph) Hirsch, whose great collection was acquired by England in 1946 and is now housed in the British Museum. Presumably, our copy is a museum duplicate.

From the publisher's standpoint (and this is one of our prime reasons in collecting) the book is noteworthy for two curious disclaimers. One, a note in the introduction by Ackermann, in which he decries the high custom tariff on imported reproductions—which necessitated the publisher using English artists instead of the illustrations offered to him by Senefelder from the original edition. And the second, an inserted printed slip, apologizing to his public for the necessity of increasing the price of this book due to "so much additional matter from the author." This added matter is the historical part which was not used in the original German edition.

The illustrations used by Ackermann for this edition are not as good as those used in the original edition—but, in several instances, they are more interesting. For one, the frontispiece reproduces the first page of the Fust & Schoeffer *Psalter* in full color. But for some strange reason, the colors for the noble initial "B" are transposed. And there is an interesting distinction between our edition and the subsequent second edition of 1827: The portrait of Senefelder is entirely different. In our copy he appears much

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younger—more than can be accounted for by the eight years between the two editions.

\* \* \*

This is a most unusual first in modern publishing! Harper & Row has just published a suspense novel by Andrew Garve entitled *The Long Short Cut*, which was set and composed by the new R.C.A. Cathode-ray tube Videocomp and computer. The book, which the Club has purchased, was produced by The Haddon Craftsmen of Scranton, Pennsylvania. This R.C.A. wonder was primarily developed for setting lists, such as telephone directories, and this present use was its first in book production. The typeface is 10-point Videocomp Janson, and it took less than 10 minutes from the time the first punched tape was fed into the computer until the first page was produced. Continuous pages were produced in less than 10-second intervals. The machine is capable of speeds up to 600 characters a second! (The fastest book type composition by any earlier method is about 10 characters a second.)

At this writing it is not known if this machine will (as it appears) revolutionize book production. Since this was a purely experimental project, comparative costs have yet to be established. But this *first in publishing* is a typical example of our wants in our growing collection of unusual book publishing.

(As we go to press, R. R. Donnelley & Sons of Chicago announce that their cathode-tube computer will "set 1,000 to 4,000 characters a second"!)

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In an earlier review (Winter, 1967) we spoke at some length on the importance of almost any early book printed from stereotypes. And in that note, we deplored the lack of knowledge on so comparatively recent a printing process. Well, hopefully, if luck continues, we may be able to add a chapter or two to that hidden or lost history of this process.

The Club has just acquired its first early book on the *subject* of stereotyping, and it is a most unusual copy. For one, it is an extremely fine copy in what appears to be its original boards and  $\frac{3}{4}$  leather with added leather label. And two, Bigmore & Wyman lists this book, but describes it with three (3) inserted plates. Our copy has eight (8) inserted plates and all of the plates are qualified by a catch-page number. The title of this book is: *Histoire et Procedes du*

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*Polypage et de la Stereotypie* by A. G. Camus, Paris, Imprimeur de l’Institut National (1801).

\* \* \*

*Private Angelo* by Eric Linklater, privately printed, London, 1957. This is the first book produced in Great Britain by *Photocomposition*. It is, so far, the most inexpensive book we have bought, but it is a “first in publishing” and as such, a prime example of the Club’s concept in building its planned collection on the subject. This copy came from the collection of Paul Bennett, one of our more illustrious members whose death was announced last year. (This is not the first edition of this text; Jonathan Cape first published it in 1946.)

\* \* \*

*Edward Philip Prince: Type Punchcutter*, by F. C. Avis, London, 1967. This book represents another in that field which your reviewer feels has been frightfully neglected. All too little has been written on the role of the printing type punch-cutter, or on his craft. We do know something about the early history of the craft, mostly by conjecture, but next to nothing about the great craftsmen who practiced this important part of the Black Art up to the *middle of this century*. Perhaps the invention by the American, Linn Boyd Benton, in the later part of the nineteenth century of his now famous Benton punch-cutting machine (which made hand punch-cutting obsolete) had a lot to do with it. But even today, few collectors or even informed type men, can distinguish between the two methods. (In effect, this distinction was the essence of Stanley Morison’s essay which the Club published in 1959.)

Although Edward Prince is mentioned by most bibliographers of the private press movement, next to nothing until now has been written about him or the famous typefaces he helped create. It was Prince who cut the types for Morris’ Kelmscott Press, for Ricketts’ Vale Press, for the Ashendene Press, the Cranach, Eragny, The Doves Press’ great roman, the Dutch Distel, and a host of others.

It is regrettable that this important work is so poorly designed and printed. But Mr. Avis (we are tempted to say, tries harder—and he does) has compiled and documented a work of lasting value on this last and certainly most distinguished punch-cutter. And it is adequately illustrated with an added plus, an original smoke print, tipped-in, of three of the unused letters made for the Doves roman! This is a “must” book for any collector of modern fine printing.

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## Book Reviews

*The Journal of Prince Alexander Liholiho: The Voyages Made to the United States, England and France in 1849-1850.* Edited by JACOB ADLER. [Honolulu], The University of Hawaii Press for the Hawaiian Historical Society, 1967. 155 pp. \$8.00.

In 1861 Dr. Gerritt P. Judd, a former missionary physician and leading official in the Hawaiian government, sadly commented on the policies and habits of the then reigning monarch, Kamehameha IV. "Having been compelled to be good when a boy," said Judd, "he is determined not to be good as a man".

Through the sometimes naive and sometimes incredibly precocious words of this journal written by the king when he was the fifteen-year-old Prince Alexander Liholiho, we observe Dr. Judd manfully trying to squelch the native high spirits of the future monarch and his brother, Lot. Drinking, card playing, and keeping late hours brought stern lectures and prayerful promises of reform, but strangely enough Judd seems not to have batted an eye when his youthful charges lit up their cigars and pipes.

Minister of Finance Judd apparently brought the two princes with him on his diplomatic mission to the United States and Europe to broaden their experience and to demonstrate that all Pacific islanders were not unschooled savages. Already well trained by the missionaries, the heirs to the throne were expected to study governmental institutions and to polish their social graces while abroad. Unfortunately for Dr. Judd and the island missionaries, the princes learned more than was intended.

The journal entries clearly show that Alexander was much impressed by the official and semi-official hospitality generously proffered in England, particularly by several high-ranking naval officers. He opened his eyes in wonder at the gold dinner service at Windsor Castle and marveled at the Royal Navy's slaughterhouse at Plymouth, "big enough to contain 250 bullocks." But he seemed most pleased by the fact that he and Lot could smoke away "like Dutchmen" in British railway carriages, and he found the London theaters "devilish good."

Alexander was less pleased with the United States. In Washington he heard that Congress had passed a law requiring that the government should receive copies of every book printed [copyrighted?] in the country. "If that is carried out," he observed, "they will have a great collection of books, & also of Trash." During a railroad journey between Washington and Baltimore a conductor mistook Alexander for a Negro and asked him

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to leave the car. The prince was understandably furious. Americans, he noted, "have no manners, no politeness, not even common civilities, to a Stranger."

When Alexander came to the Hawaiian throne in 1854, negotiations for annexation to the United States were discontinued, and the American missionaries, who had for years controlled the government, were quickly pushed to the background. The new monarch looked to Englishmen for his principal political and religious advisors. These events are clearly foreshadowed in the king's boyhood diary. Although the importance of the 1849-1850 journey in shaping Hawaiian history has long been recognized, the full impact is most clearly grasped by reading Alexander's own on-the-spot impressions, here made available in print for the first time.

In addition to being a significant addition to the historical literature of Hawaii, this volume is a bibliophile's delight. Manufactured by the Printing Department of the University of Chicago for the University of Hawaii Press, it is cleanly printed and handsomely bound. Both the American Institute of Graphic Arts and the Association of American University Presses have included it in their lists of the year's best books.

JOHN A. HUSSEY

E. J. O'Dwyer, *Thomas Frognall Dibdin, Bibliographer & Bibliomaniac Extraordinary, 1776-1847*. Pinner, Middlesex, Private Libraries Association. 1967. 45 p. \$4.50 (\$2.50 to PLA members).

Thomas Frognall Dibdin has been described as "the world's worst bibliographer," and even during his lifetime it was fashionable to disparage him. In spite of this indictment, however, he has always been widely collected, for many of his books are fine typographical achievements. Beyond that, Dibdin makes for interesting reading, for he was a leading figure in the glorious days of book-collecting of the early nineteenth century. His passion for books and reading and his gossipy chronicling of a period that is becoming almost legendary still make for fascinating reading for the new and old bibliophile alike. His private life, one of enthusiasms and keen involvement, drifted in many directions, including the priesthood, the navy, and the vice-presidency of the famous Roxburghe Club, which he helped organize.

Dibdin has never had a thorough biographical treatment, the available studies being mainly pen portraits by contemporaries and his own *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (1836). O'Dwyer has given here what can best be called a preliminary sketch for a fuller biography, and it is hoped that

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this will be the case. He has blocked in the main framework of Dibdin's life and tried to treat objectively the criticisms of the years. He has also thrown additional light on the still inadequately explored subjects of author-patron and author-bookseller (and publisher) relationships. He has, without question, an admiration for Dibdin, but it arises more from Dibdin's "vision of books" than from his scholarship. The little book is illustrated with a frontispiece portrait, several title pages and a few other items. There follows a checklist of the biographical works of Dibdin.

R. E. B.

**RICHARD E. LINGENFELTER**, *Presses of the Pacific Islands, 1817-1867*: A history of the first half century of printing in the Pacific Islands. Los Angeles, The Plantin Press, 1967. xvi, 132 pp., map, port., reproductions of six book pages, and five decorative woodcuts by Edgar Dorsey Taylor. \$20.00.

This is a collection of pleasant and useful short histories of the printing press during the years 1817 to 1867 in the various island groups of the vast Pacific Ocean area. Each chapter is supported by a short discussion of its sources.

There is a very useful chronological list of the presses and printers operating in the area during the years under review, but no bibliographies of the products of these presses. "Bibliographical Notes" show that the author has consulted the scholarly resources of the field, and an index completes the volume. As a piece of bookmaking, this book is a fine example of the distinguished work done by Saul and Lillian Marks at their Plantin Press, in Los Angeles.

G. L. H.

**J. D. B. STILLMAN**, *The Gold Rush Letters of J. D. B. Stillman*, with an introduction by Kenneth Johnson. Lewis Osborne, Palo Alto, California, 1967. 74 pp. \$10.00.

It was summer, 1849. Jacob Davis Babcock Stillman, M. D., lately arrived in California from New York via Cape Horn, was beating his way with a few companions up the Sacramento River in a small boat, bound for the gold fields. Writing home a few weeks later, he described the stream, then so beautiful, "its banks everywhere bordered with stately trees and festooned with wild grapes." "The water was so clear," he added, "we could see the fish."

Other reviews of this book undoubtedly will point out that Stillman's letters from mid-1849 to late 1850 form one of the most valuable primary sources on the gold rush era, giving vivid pictures of the great Sacramento

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Valley flood of 1849-50, throwing much light on the early medical history of Sacramento and San Francisco, and providing a graphic eye-witness account of the Sacramento squatter riots. But readers of the *News-Letter* may be quite as interested in knowing that these letters were penned by an educated, literate, sensitive, and compassionate man, whose writings are today as entrancing as revealing glimpses of unchanging human character and pictures of a now-vanished natural beauty as they are as chronicles of events.

Dr. Stillman was not unaware that writing often brings as its rewards a modicum of recognition and a measure of immortality. In one of his letters he mentions the death of a gold seeker named Weld, who had published in a California journal a "mournful lament" entitled "Adieu, but not forever?" Stillman had not met the author, but he felt impelled to pay his respects to the body. "I venture to say," he later wrote, "that the only tears shed over his bier were from one who never knew him save by those few lines."

Stillman himself became a reasonably prolific author. In 1851 he published what has been termed "the third medical account of California authored by a physician," and he later wrote a number of magazine articles and the text that accompanied Eadweard Muybridge's famous photographs of the horse in motion. His major work, however, was the book, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, published in San Francisco in 1877. This volume is not too easy to come by, and Lewis Osborne and Kenneth M. Johnson have performed a service by extracting the letters describing Stillman's gold rush experiences and reissuing them in an attractive and convenient form for present-day readers. Designed by Lewis Osborne and printed by George Waters, the new book has been selected for inclusion in the Rounce & Coffin Club's 1968 Western Books Exhibition.

JOHN A. HUSSEY

PIERRE GARNIER, *A Medical Journey in California* by Dr. Pierre Garnier, introduced and annotated by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., translated by L. Jay Oliva. Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, Los Angeles, 1967. 93 pp. \$12.50.

When Dr. Pierre Garnier, a conservative French physician, reached California in 1851 he was shocked at what he saw concerning the practice of medicine. "No law regulates the healing art in the land of gold," he noted in disbelief. After more than a year spent largely in the coastal cities of central California, Garnier returned to Paris, where in 1854 he published his observations on the state of his profession in the new El Dorado.

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Extremely rare, Garnier's pamphlet (first issued as a series of articles in a French medical journal) has only recently come to the attention of scholars, who have been quick to recognize its historical importance. For instance, it was a major source drawn upon by George W. Groh for his 1966 book, *Gold Fever*, that fascinating *exposé* of medical charlatanry and fraud during the gold rush. While Garnier's account undoubtedly will appeal more to the scholar and the doctor than to the general reader, there are enough titbits of human interest material to reward even the casual browser. Garnier's remarks on the diet of the Hispanic-Californians, for example, will give pause to those romantic souls who persist in believing that every California *rancho* was the home of a gourmet cook.

In issuing this handsome publication, Professor Nunis and the Zeitlins have made a three-fold contribution. First, they have made readily available in English an important primary source, evidently the fifth known substantial medical description of California to be written by a trained physician and the fourth such account to be published. Second, Professor Nunis's superb introduction not only places Garnier's narrative in its historical setting, but it constitutes a guide to the literature of California's medical history from Spanish settlement to the organization of the first state medical society. Third, the physical book, cleanly and chastely printed in an edition of 500 copies by Grant Dahlstrom, demonstrates that footnotes placed at the bottoms of the pages where they belong and an adequate index need not detract from typographic effectiveness.

JOHN A. HUSSEY

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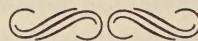
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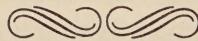
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